



Backcountry Food Storage Policy Update

May 2013

Beginning June 1, 2013, North Cascades National Park Complex will begin requiring hard-sided food storage canisters at ten (10) backcountry camps and in five (5) cross-country zones. Food storage requirements for the remainder of the Park Complex will stay the same: all food and scented items must be hung (minimum 10 feet off the ground, 4 feet from any tree limb or trunk) or stored in an allowed hard-sided canister or park-provided food storage locker.

The following backcountry camps will require canisters from June 1—November 15 every year:

Desolation
Fisher
Hooter
Monogram Lake

Pierce Mountain
Sahale Glacier
Sourdough
Thornton Lakes

Thunder Basin
Trapper Inlet

The following cross-country zones will require canisters for all or portions of the zones, from June 1—November 15 every year:

Boston Basin (portions*)
Eldorado (portions*)

Hidden Lake (all)
Sulphide Glacier (portions*)

Tapto Lakes (all)

For the three high use climbing zones (Boston Basin, Eldorado, Sulphide Glacier), canisters will be required for anyone planning to camp at or below the vegetation line (whether under snow or not), including: Boston Basin upper and lower camps, Eldorado Basin and the ridge between Eldorado and Roush Creeks, and anywhere at or below “the notch” south of Sulphide Glacier. Food canisters will **not be required for any camping on glaciers or high routes, such as the Boston-Sahale Col, Torment-Forbidden traverse, base of the East Ridge on Eldorado, and either of the Sulphide Glacier bivy sites. Maps of these areas are available at ranger stations and online. Hidden and Tapto Lakes zones will require canisters for all overnight stays, as all practicable camping areas are well within the vegetation zone.*

The above areas were selected as mandatory canister areas for one or more of the following factors: hanging food is either very difficult or impossible due to the nature of the vegetation or lack of trees suitable for hanging; wildlife have obtained food from campers in the past due to improper food storage, which can lead to habituated wildlife and thus risks to either the wildlife, campers, or gear; the presence of bears and/or other wildlife is high; and/or visitor use is high. For all areas of the park, proper food storage has been and will remain a requirement. Human food is an attractive source of calories for many animals, including rodents, marmots, goats, bears, ravens, deer, etc. Proper backcountry food storage is essential to safeguard the health and safety of visitors and wildlife, and is crucial to maintaining the park’s wilderness character.

CANISTER LOAN PROGRAM

The park has Bear Vault and Backpackers Cache canister models available for free loan (with credit card deposit) at the Marblemount Ranger Station, Glacier Public Service Center, Park & Forest Information Center in Sedro-Woolley, Newhalem Visitor Center, and Golden West Visitor Center in Stehekin. In addition, the Wilderness Information Center in Marblemount has limited quantities of Bearikade carbon-fiber, ultra-light canisters for a \$5 rental fee (in order to cover the higher cost of these canisters). If bringing a canister from home, campers can use any of these models. For a complete list of additional allowed canisters, please refer to the Certified Product List (backpacking and small storage containers) as produced by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee website: <http://www.igbconline.org/> and look for the link for certified bear-resistant products.

For questions, please contact the Wilderness Information Center at (360) 854-7245 or email noca_wilderness@nps.gov.